

## Numbers Chapter 19

The Law of the Red Heifer

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V: 1-2 Red heifer: Why red? Blood?

**Genesis 2:7** “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”

- Adam, the first man was created by God from the dust of the earth.
- Adam – means “man”; “adom” a very similar word means “red”.
- Adam is actually a contraction of the Hebrew word “adamah” which literally means “red earth”.
- Without spot: “spot” (H8549) “**taw-meem**” – entire, complete, integrity, true, perfect.
- Without spot meaning; inherent defects, no birth defects, a perfect specimen.
- Without blemish: no acquired defects, no injuries or scars.
- No yoke: never been used as a beast of burden.
- This is all a description of Jesus; fully a man, no inherent sin, no sin nature – having a led a sinless life, no acquired sinfulness – never having been put under the yoke of sin always operating effortlessly by the power of the spirit.
- This is why Jesus could offer us His yoke; because it is easy and effortless, He in turn takes our yoke of sin.

**Matthew 11:28-30** <sup>28</sup>Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. <sup>30</sup>For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”

V: 3-4 The priest would lead the heifer out of the camp where she would be slain before him by another, he was to witness this.

**Matthew 27:31-33** <sup>31</sup>And after that they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His own raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him. <sup>32</sup>And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear His cross. <sup>33</sup>And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull.” – They crucified Him.

- Our Lord Jesus was taken out of the camp, just out of Jerusalem and sacrificed outside the camp – which was witnessed by the priests.

- Caiaphas condemned Jesus to death, but the sentence was executed by the Romans.
- The animal was slaughtered by a layman, a different word is used here to describe killing the animal as opposed to sacrificing it, there was no altar involved as with a normal sacrifice.
- Eleazar the priest was to take some of the blood with his hands and sprinkle it before the Tabernacle, before the presence of God with his own finger, 7 times.

**Matthew 27:24-25** “<sup>24</sup>When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. <sup>25</sup>Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.”

- This is similar to the previous sin offerings where the blood was sprinkled 7 times.
- How many witnesses declared that Jesus was innocent? 7

V: 5 The Heifer was to be completely burned in the presence of the priest. Again a different word was used to describe burning this animal as opposed to a burnt offering.

V: 6 The priest was to add to the burning of the heifer the elements of the cross; the same elements used in the cleansing of the leper.

- **Cedar wood**: the cross – door post / lentil – Passover.
- **Hyssop**: used to place the blood on the lentil and door posts as the Passover. Dipped in gaul and lifted up to Jesus.

**Psalms 51:6-7** “<sup>6</sup>Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. <sup>7</sup>Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

- **Scarlet**: representing the blood that was shed for the remission of our sins.

V: 7 We'll see the same thing in successive layers of involvement through the process those that would clean others in this process, would themselves become defiled and unclean in the process.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

V: 8-10 Each person involved in the process ends up becoming unclean until the evening (next day). This is because of their involvement with a dead body.

- The ashes are to be sprinkled into the water of purification, which will eventually be sprinkled upon the unclean as part of the cleansing process.
- The ashes were kept outside the camp in a clean place.
- About 10 years ago, those involved in the Temple institute in Jerusalem certified a herd of red heifers. Developed in Texas, shipped to Israel, and declared Kosher by the chief rabbi's, they now have the ashes in waiting along with a supply of the necessary cattle to continue the process.
- There is a tradition amongst the Jewish people that as the ashes of the first red heifer was being used up, they prepared and burned another to replace it, they then took some of the remaining ashes from the first and mixed it into the ashes of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, then the 2<sup>nd</sup> into the 3<sup>rd</sup> and so on.
- They only actually used give or take about 6 heifers from the first one to the last.
- Part of their dilemma, and a reason for their current search is to find the ashes of the original red heifer from before the Temple was destroyed. Some are still searching some of the caves near Qumran, others think some were deposited in a cistern which lies beneath St. Stephen's Greek Orthodox church just across the Kidron Valley opposite the Temple mount.

V: 11-16 Anyone who touches a dead body, bones, or a tomb; or is in a house wherein is a dead body, whether of natural causes or as a result of battle they are unclean for a minimum of 7 days. Whatever they touch becomes unclean and must be cleansed. As opposed to only one day for the red heifer.

- Notice that through this process it took some time, 7 days for them to be declared clean.
- With the blood of Jesus, our cleansing is immediate and complete.

**1 John 1:7-9** <sup>7</sup>“But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. <sup>8</sup>If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup>If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

**Hebrews 9:13-14** <sup>13</sup>“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: <sup>14</sup>How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

V: 17-19 There is a remedy, there is a process to being made clean.

- People who were ceremonially unclean, defiled from touching a body or a tomb had to wait 3 days after their defilement, then they would go out of the camp with a ceremonially clean man to the place where the ashes were kept.
- The clean man would mix some of the ashes with running water in a vessel, dip the hyssop into the water and sprinkle it on the unclean person. They would repeat this process again 4 days later on the 7<sup>th</sup> day.
- The person to be cleansed would then wash themselves and their clothes, wait until even, and re-enter the camp, and be clean.
- This would be the 8<sup>th</sup> day – the new beginning.
- Notice that an unclean person cannot cleanse themselves; a clean person must do it for them.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

V: 20-22 The man who does not purify himself remains unclean, and is to be cut off from the congregation – killed / stoned.

- Being purified, being made clean involves taking an action, being pro-active – it doesn't just happen, time doesn't fix this.

**1 John 1:9** “If we confess our sins...”

- Notice that inaction – remaining in that defiled, sinful state results in death.

**Romans 6:23** “For the wages of sin is death...”

- Gospel message; “I’ll wait” – “maybe later” – any response besides “yes” = “no” / rejection = death.
- It was obviously a serious offense if a defiled person refused to be purified, because it defiled the camp.

**Leviticus 26:11-12** “<sup>11</sup>And I will set My tabernacle among you: and My soul shall not abhor you. <sup>12</sup>And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be My people.”

- God's presence dwelt in the Tabernacle in the center of the camp, therefore the camp had to be kept Holy and clean.

**1 Peter 1:15-16** “<sup>15</sup>But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; <sup>16</sup>because it is written, be ye holy; for I am holy.”

- Coming from Kadesh, heading back towards the wilderness area near the Red Sea, they’ve been told that everyone over the age of 20 is going to die during the next 40 years. God is preparing them to deal with that.
- 600,000 men, adding in women and children, approximately 3 million people. Living together, travelling together – averaging about 200 people / day dying – it was inevitable that they would become defiled and unclean.
- God gave them a way of dealing with it.
- This whole teaching was also one more step away from the occult practices of Egypt, one more step away from a place where they kept the mummified remains of their dead in their homes and worshipped the dead.

Just as Jesus said:

**Matthew 22:32** “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

- The church today doesn’t live under the law, nor do we concern ourselves with external ritual uncleanness.
- We should however be concerned with the fact that our God wants us to be a holy people; guarding ourselves against spiritual defilement through sin.

**2 Corinthians 7:1** “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

- We are called to cleanse ourselves from the filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit.
- God promises the forgiveness and cleansing of our sins if we will just confess:

**1 John 1:9** “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

**1 Peter 1:18-23** “<sup>18</sup>Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; <sup>19</sup>but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: <sup>20</sup>Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, <sup>21</sup>who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. <sup>22</sup>Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure

heart fervently: <sup>23</sup>Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”